THE BEACONVIEW

State of North Carolina Office of the State Controller

HR/Payroll Project Successfully Launches Second Go-Live

> "BEACON is about providing employees with new tools and information to better manage their work, their personal information and their careers."
>
> — State Controller Robert L. Powell

There is an old saying that suggests, "People forget how fast you did a job, but they remember how well you did it." A job well done was realized on April 1, when after spending five years in the planning and development phases, the BEACON HR/Payroll project team completed an historic upgrade of the State's antiquated business systems.

The good work of OSC and BEACON employees came to fruition when more than 66,000 Group Two agency employees joined the 19,000 Group One agency employees already using the new system to start conducting their own human resources and payroll transactions. Specifically, the new system allows state employees to update their personal and benefits information, check current and previous payroll data and record their working time from most computers with an Internet connection.

One of the project's more notable accomplishments was the training team's delivery of 55,794 hours of training over an 11 week period to 2,708 Group Two core users. The strong training effort provided core users at each agency with the knowledge needed to conduct human resources, benefits and payroll transactions in the new system.

The BEACON system was created using software company SAP's enterprise resource planning software package. The software is designed to allow future business operations to be added to the BEACON system. The General Assembly already has approved funding to add electronic recruiting, which will keep track of state job applicants; and electronic training, which will handle a number of training-related functions, to the new system.
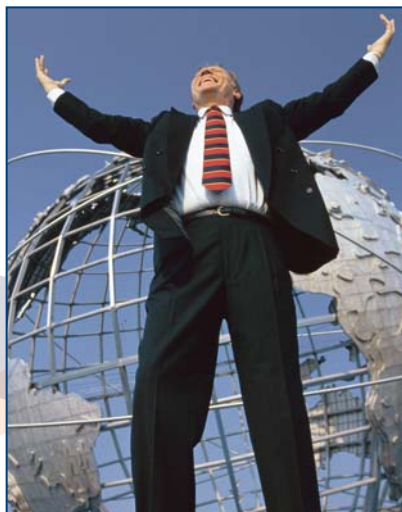
Planning has started on the next phase of the project, which will add budgeting, accounting and cash management functions. When completed, the BEACON system will provide centralized, coordinated business operations that can improve efficiency and provide timely, accurate information for decision-makers and the public.

In addition to future projects that fall under the BEACON umbrella, the Controller's Office houses support and training departments. From a support perspective, agents from the BEST Shared Services Center are available from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday to assist state employees in conducting human resources, benefits and payroll transactions. The training department, dubbed BEACON University, will handle on going training needs for the State's human resources, payroll and financial systems. Web-based training will continue to be available for state employee's using Employee and Manager Self Service.

Although, no new data will be added to the State's legacy personnel and payroll systems, they will continue to operate until all state entities, including universities, have rolled off the system and all necessary historical data has been transferred.

Full details regarding the BEACON program are available on the Office of the State Controller's BEACON program website at *www.beacon.nc.gov*.

Employee and Manager Self Service User Updates

Employee Self Service Tax Withholding Information

ESS will only allow employees to select the following exemption types:

- Not Exempt
- Exempt, Reportable

The following exemption types were removed from the selection in ESS:

- Exempt, Not Reportable
- Exempt, Partially Reportable

If an employee wants to claim exempt, not reportable or exempt, partially reportable, he or she must go through BEST to maintain their tax withholdings.

When a withholding record is created or changed, there will be a minimum of a seven day delay before the change goes into effect. For example, if a record was changed on April 4, it would not go into effect until April 11. Employees do have the option to identify a future start date. For example, an employee could enter a change on April 4, but designate that he or she does not want it to go into effect until May 1.

Creating/Updating Secondary Deposit Accounts

When making a change to an existing supplemental direct deposit account or setting up a new supplemental direct deposit account, employees should make the change effective beginning the first day of the upcoming pay period. For employees who are paid monthly, that would be the first day of each month (e.g. January 1, February 1, March 1, etc.). For employees who are paid biweekly, that would be the first day of the upcoming biweekly payroll cycle, visit *www.ncosc.net/BEST/support/payroll/ Biweekly_Payroll_Dates.pdf* for more information.

Manager Self Service Reports

The Manager Self Service portion of the BEACON portal now offers some reports. These reports act as a supplement to MSS Time Approval by allowing managers to, among other things, monitor all working times entered into ESS by direct reports, reconcile previously approved times and identify time that has been saved, but not yet submitted for approval. For more information on these reports and how to use them, visit the BEACON Help site at *http://help.mybeacon.nc.gov/beaconhelp/ TOC4.html.*

Maintaining Substitutions in MSS

Through the Maintain Substitutions feature in MSS, mangers can create shift substitutions for their employees. In situations when an employee is unable to work his/her shift, the employee's manager can substitute another employee for that shift by creating a substitution record. For more information on this and other MSS functionality, managers should visit *http://help.mybeacon.nc.gov/beaconhelp/TOC4.html.*

BEST Agents Assist State Employees Using New System

BEST (BEACON Enterprise Support Team) Shared Services is a support organization for employees and agency human resources and payroll personnel designed to provide:

- Human resources, benefits and payroll administration services based on standard processes, policies and systems

- Accurate, consistent and timely answers to human resources, benefits and payroll questions

- Support for reporting activities

BEST Shared Services is one point of contact for employee questions regarding human resources, payroll, time entry and benefits. Additionally, agency HR/Payroll representatives should be able to answer many human resources and payroll related questions; especially those that are agency-specific policy or procedure questions.

BEST Shared Services' agents can be reached from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday by phone, e-mail, fax or postal mail. The organization is housed within the Office of the State Controller, and is staffed by state employees who are specifically trained to respond to human resources, benefits and payroll oriented questions. Visit the BEST Shared Services website at *www.ncosc.net/best* to access human resources forms and to learn more about the services provided by BEST.

BEST Shared Services Contact Information

Phone, Raleigh Area: 919-707-0707

Phone, Statewide: 866-NCBEST4U (866-622-3784)

Fax: 919-855-6861

E-mail: BEST@ncosc.net

Address: 1425 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-1425

BEACON Takes Security Seriously

The BEACON system utilizes 128-bit encryption via SSL (Security Socket Layer) technology to ensure that employee data is securely transmitted between the BEACON server and an employee's web browser.

The SSL protocol has been approved by the Internet Engineering Task Force as a standard, and is widely used by financial organizations for on-line banking and investing, as well as by companies offering on-line purchases by credit card.

No one else can access an employee's personal data via the BEACON Portal other than the employee. To log on to the system an employee must enter her NCID and the password she created. The State's human resources professionals, with the proper security clearance, can only access employee personal data using the state network through the BEACON back-end system.

The BEACON databases are secured within the state network under compliance with statewide security standards put in place by the North Carolina Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) Enterprise Security and Risk Management Office. The BEACON system complies with all statewide security policies and guidelines to ensure that your personal data is protected.

To further protect sensitive information, employees:

- Should create a password that is not easily guessed by others and is a mixture of upper and lower case letters, combined with numbers and/or special characters (NCID requires a minimum of 8 characters and at least 1 special character)

- Should close their browser after logging off

- Should ensure the browser they are using is Internet Explorer 6.0 with Service Pack 1 or Internet Explorer 7.0

- Should not share their password with others or write it down and leave it in the open
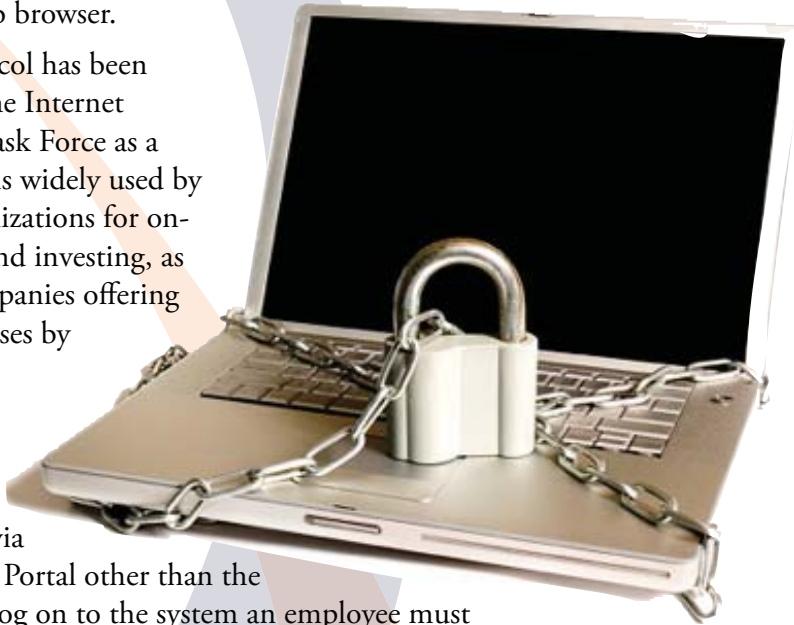
Training Quick Facts

The BEACON University Team:

Developed
24 Courses

Delivered
83,792 Hours of Training

Offered
1,616 Classes

Trained
3,330 Core Users

For more information, please contact:

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